

Council on Educational Services for Exceptional Children
Meeting Minutes
July 15, 2009

Members Present

Sonja	Brown	
Odell	Clanton	
Curtis	Garland	(for Gloria Upperman)
Sally	Hunter	
Thomasine	Hardy	(for Dwight Pearson)
Nicole	Jimerson	
Felix	Keyes	
Shary	Maskel	
Ann	Maxwell	
Teresa	Mebane	
Doris	McCain	
Linda	Nelson	
Jill	Scercy	
Cynthia	Wilson	

Members Absent

Bob	Atwater
Jana	Griggs
Esther	High
Susan	Humbert
Cathy	Kea
Sheila	Knapp
Laura	Wiley
Mark	Yost

Visitors

Cynthia	Daniels-Hall
Eric	Hall

DPI Staff / Presenters

Tish	Bynum
Mike	Martin
Kate	Neale
Barbara	Scriven
Mary	Watson

Welcome / Review of Agenda / Approval of Minutes

Kate Neale opened the meeting by announcing that Jane Young, Chairperson of the Council, retired. Sonja Brown, Vice Chairperson, will now serve as head of the Council. The Council began with introductions noting new members; Felix Keyes, Ann Maxwell, Cynthia Wilson and Joe Sutton. The Council reviewed the agenda.

The December meeting minutes were approved in March via email.

Elect Officers; Approve Bylaws

The Bylaws were not approved electronically in March and were discussed today. A draft copy of the Bylaws was provided to the Council. The draft copy incorporates changes to align with appropriate NC General Statute references/citations and allow two terms of office for the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. At the last Council meeting, it was suggested to add two young people with disabilities to the Council membership. After consideration, it was decided not to include them as mandatory members. However, the Council would still like to work with local colleges to have a young person participate in Council meetings.

The Bylaws require a two-thirds majority (17) to vote. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Bylaws as written in the draft form.

The Council was also charged with electing new officers. Sonja Brown has been serving as Vice Chairperson and expressed an interest in serving as Chairperson. The Chairperson has the responsibility of presiding over the meetings, consulting over agendas and meeting minutes. Nicole Jimerson has expressed an interest in serving as Vice Chairperson. The Vice Chairperson's responsibility is to serve as back up for the Chairperson. Sonja Brown was unanimously elected as Chairperson and Nicole Jimerson was unanimously elected as Vice Chairperson.

Letter of Recommendation to the State Board of Education

The Council will submit a letter of recommendation to the State Board of Education regarding its disagreement with adding algebra and science to the Occupational Course of Study (OCS) curriculum. The Council is gravely concerned about elevating the OCS standards. In most cases, the life and job skills needed by this population are based on concrete definitive skills; ie money, weights, measurements, etc. The Council also emphasizes the current rigor of the OCS program for those students for whom OCS was originally developed.

The Council also wants to make sure the State Board of Education is aware that this change may likely produce a higher dropout rate for children with disabilities. Parents and LEAs are perceiving these changes as a serious roadblock for students to graduate. Large numbers of students, in and out of the OCS program, will be lost because schools are not focusing on basic concrete life skills.

The Council is aware that No Child Left Behind standards are mandating these changes but, the Council is concerned this is superceding the individual needs of the child. The change in OCS is a national issue. Currently there is the college path or the OCS. The changes in OCS are more aligned with the standard course of study and Essential Standards.

Annual Performance Report and OSEP Letter

The Council was provided a copy of the Annual Performance Report (APR) submitted February 2, 2009, and a copy of the determination letter from the US Dept. of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), advising NC of their "Meets Requirements" status. This accomplishment is a result of a lot of hard work from the LEAs and the EC Division. It is a cause to celebrate.

Barbara Scriven, Monitoring Consultant, provided the Council with an update of NC's status for each of the 20 indicators within the APR.

LEA determination reports were available on the website by June 2, 2009.

Agency Update

Mary Watson, Director of Exceptional Division, provided the Council a copy of the March EC Directors' Institute presentation. Ms. Watson reminded the Council that NC meeting the requirements for the APR is a huge accomplishment and involves a lot of hard work on behalf of the LEAs and the Division. NC is making a difference and the data proves it. The hard work pays off when we all pull together. Ms. Watson updated the Council on the following:

- Division and Agency organizational structure
- State Board of Education changes, specifically district 2 and district 5
- Regional coverage for EC technical support
- Submission of reports to the General Assembly on private residential treatment facilities and the study of High School students with disabilities.
- Personnel development trainings by the EC Division
- State Improvement Project results in math and reading
- RtI and PBS participation in NC
- Funding applications
- Coordinated Early Intervening Services
- OT/PT/SLP Summits
- Governor School

Ms. Watson also reviewed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, commonly referred to as stimulus funding. ARRA funds are broken down into several pots of money with their own set of complicated rules for each. ARRA funds were almost double the regular LEA IDEA grant funds. LEA Finance Officers are aware of how to use ARRA funds. The same chart of accounts is used for ARRA funds and IDEA funds. Ms. Watson also explained the reduction in maintenance of effort. No ARRA funds were retained at the state level.

Update on Accountability and Curriculum Reform Effort (ACRE)

Mike Martin, Consultant with Policy and Strategic Planning, gave an overview of the Accountability and Curriculum Reform Effort (ACRE). ACRE involves Essential Standards, Assessments, and Accountability. The Essential Standards involve a mandate for a narrowed and deepened curriculum. Currently there are drafts of English 10, K-12 Math, K-12 Science, Information and Tech Skills K-12, and OCS.

The Assessment involves a comprehensive balanced assessment system. This includes summative assessments at the state level; benchmark assessments at the classroom, school, and district levels; and formative assessments at the classroom level. Summative assessments are aligned to the Essential Standards, are transparent; used primarily for school, district and state accountability; use 21st Century technology; and are technically sound. Benchmark assessments are aligned to Essential Standards; used by the teacher, school and district; include various item types; and are diagnostic. Formative assessment at the classroom level is a key instructional practice for meeting student needs and improving achievement.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.